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ABSTRACT

The training manual for establishing a college student mentoring program was developed to help educators enhance the educational experience of newly enrolled college students, particularly first generation and minority students. The manual first defines the terms associated with the mentor concept in order to ensure congruence in the terminology, and then lists the goals and objectives of a mentor program. Next, general profiles are provided of both the mentor and the mentee along with definitions of the roles of the student mentor and the college faculty and staff. Finally, the training activities for mentors are given along with a discussion of ethical principles encompassed in a mentoring program. Appendixes provide: a sample timetable for program development; a mentee personal data form; a faculty/staff appointment sheet; a mentee program evaluation sheet; and a program evaluation for faculty, staff, and student mentors. Contains 15 references. (GLR)

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Innovative Practices and Developments in Student Mentoring

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Innovative Practices and Developments in Student Mentoring is a training manual based on the belief that the mentoring concept when used appropriately can be a positive force in the recruitment and retention of minority and first generation students. Its aims and purposes are to reflect the increasingly important role of mentoring in improving the recruitment, retention, and graduation rates of minority and first-generation students and to provide a generic guide for educational institutions that might want to develop mentoring programs. Funding for this project was provided by a mini-grant to West Virginia State College by the West Virginia Higher Education Central Office.

The manuscripts, opinions, and accuracy of facts in this training manual rest solely with the authors. Articles in this manual do not represent in any way the views of the West Virginia Higher Education Central Office or West Virginia State College. Copies of articles in this manual may be reproduced for the purpose of educational or scientific advancement. Otherwise, no part of this work may be reproduced or utilized in any form or by any means without permission in writing from the authors.

Innovative Practices and Developments in Student Mentoring

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It is our desire that the *Innovative Practices and Developments in Student Mentoring* training manual will be a useful tool in the development of campuswide retention programs.

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Introduction

The primary goal of the Mentor Program should be to enhance the educational experience of students after enrolling in college. The program should also provide students with experiences that promote cognitive and affective development. Students should not be viewed as individuals with only academic and career goals but also in need of personal development and leadership experiences.

The Mentor Program can be important in providing the student with "a concerned person" who will listen, understand, negotiate and serve as a role model. In addition, the program can provide the student with an advocate to deal with the increasingly sophisticated bureaucracy on the college campus (i.e. financial aid process, registration & advisement, payment of bills, etc.).

First generation and minority students are usually the primary focus of mentoring efforts. The ability to adjust to the demands of the college environment are often difficult for these students. In addition, other factors such as loneliness, poor self-esteem, poor self-concept, career indecision, value conflicts & clarifications, often lead to these students being unsuccessful in most college environments. The Mentor Program can help students successfully cope with many of these concerns.

According to the College Board, "the improvement, enhancement, and implementation of student programs and services is most likely to lead to improved student retention". Thus, the establishment of a Mentor Program

could lead to higher retention rates, especially for those minority and first-generation students, who have limited educational aspirations, who find the educational environment inhospitable, and have limited exposure to positive role models.

The Mentor Program should not be viewed as a vehicle that releases faculty, staff, student services professionals, or administrators from their personal and professional responsibilities.

The Mentor Program should also be linked to the campuswide effort in establishing and maintaining a retention conscious environment. Without a campuswide focus and participation, the Mentor Program, like all retention programs will have very limited success on a college or university campus.

Defining the Mentor Concept

Definition of Terms

The understanding of the terminology used in the development of a Mentor Program is also crucial to its success. It is important that all persons involved have the same basic understanding of the role each is to play in the mentoring process.

This definition of terms is provided to ensure congruence in the terminology and the expectations therein.

Mentor is defined as an experienced faculty, staff, or administrator who is a friend, advocate, trusted counselor, or knowledgeable guide.

Mentee is defined as a student (first generation or minority person) who voluntarily participates in the activities and programs provided by the Mentor Program.

First Generation Student is defined as a student whose parents did not attend college. They are usually the first in the family to attend a college or university.

Minority student is defined as those students who are African-American, Hispanic, Indian, Asian-American, or other non-white origin. In most cases, the primary focus will be on African-American students. The emphasis could be different when location and demographics of the university population are taken into account.

Student Mentor is defined as selected Junior and Senior level persons interested and trained in helping new students complete the transition from high school to the college environment.

Retention conducive environment is defined as a college environment that has interested faculty/staff, administrators, friendly caring advisors, and supportive peers.

This definition of terms is not intended to be exhaustive but to provide an initial frame of reference. Mentor programs, after they are established, should constantly update the definition of terms to reflect change in the college or university environment.

Goals and Objectives

Goals

The primary goal of the Mentor Program is to enhance the cognitive and affective educational experiences of students once they enroll in a college or university. Other goals might also be included in the establishment of the program. The Mentor Program might include the following as primary or secondary goals:

To ensure a smooth transition, career development, and the college environment.

To link higher education, career development, and the quality of life before and after graduation.

To provide positive and relevant role models.

To establish career and educational goals.

To provide a consistent and reliable source of support and inspiration.

To provide a structured experience to discuss and reflect on the college experience.

To learn from experienced (Mentor/Mentee interaction).

Objectives

The overall objective of the Mentor Program should be to increase student retention and provide an ongoing orientation to all aspects of the college or university. Additional objectives might include:

To provide students with a variety of social, cultural, and intellectual activities.

To promote student leadership development.

To promote activities which will promote students' adjustment to college life.

To enhance better relationships between students, administrators, faculty, staff, and the community.

To use campus resources for referrals (counseling, tutoring, advising, health services, student activities, student government, career planning & placement, advisement).

To develop a retention conducive environment through personal interaction with caring supportive persons associated with the college and community.

Profile of a Mentor/Mentee

Mentor

The profile of a Mentor would be very difficult to determine since the needs and interests of the Mentee might be eclectic. Mentors would need to have a variety of attributes and interests. There is no perfect profile of a mentor that would meet the needs of all students but a number of common qualities should be considered when selecting Mentors for minority and first generation students.

The following list of characteristics is not intended to be inclusive but to provide general guidelines in evaluating individuals interested in being active participants. They are:

Mentors should be flexible and compassionate.

Mentors should understand and have some knowledge of the background, needs, and interest of the Mentee.

Mentors should have a positive attitude.

Mentors should be thoroughly familiar with the college environment and services available.

Mentors should be committed to the Mentoring Program.

Mentors should be willing to share personal and social experiences with the Mentee.

Mentors should be effective communicators.

Mentors should be willing to commit time and effort in establishing and maintaining open lines of communication with the Mentee.

Mentors should be willing to evaluate the relationship when the Mentee has outgrown the relationship.

Mentors should always use the highest level of personal and social ethics in their dealings with the Mentee.

Mentee

The Mentee that chooses to participate in the Mentor Program should also realize that certain characteristics are necessary to enhance ones overall educational experiences and to ensure the success of the program.

The attributes that the Mentee should be expected to exhibit are as follows. This list is not intended to be exhaustive but to provide guidelines for Mentee participation in the program. The Mentee should:

Participate in the program based upon his or her own needs and desires.

Be punctual in meeting with Mentors at stated dates and times.

Have a positive attitude.

Make a commitment to participate and make changes if necessary.

Be willing to view their educational and personal experiences in relation to their new environment.

Be willing to examine values and clarify inconsistencies as needed.

Be willing to make the pursuit of academic excellence his or her primary goal.

Be willing to examine study habits and academic readiness with Mentors.

Exhibit ethical and moral character in developing and maintaining a relationship with the Mentor.

The Role of the Student Mentor

The student mentor can be another valuable asset in establishing and maintaining a successful Mentor Program. The phenomenon of "peer support" is a powerful force in determining campus values, behaviors, and accepted norms in a college environment.

The student mentor can also help Mentees find their place in the college environment. If the "environmental fit" is established early in the college transitional period, the retention rate for minority and first generation students should be enhanced. Student Mentors can and should be primary facilitators in this process. They can also be crucial to the Mentee's persistence in the college environment during their first six to nine weeks on campus. Research has shown that this is the critical period when most minority and first generation students will decide if they fit, or if they will leave the college environment.

The student mentor should reflect on the first impressions and ideas concerning campus life and pass on those experiences to the Mentee. The sharing of significant events, persons, and other happenings can assure the Mentee that they will also complete the transition.

The student mentor should consider the following process to prepare for their assignment:

1. Be familiar with all administrative procedures concerning registration, financial aid, housing, advising, class schedules, student activities, and parking regulations.

2. Be prepared to meet with Mentees frequently during the first six to nine weeks of the college year.
3. Be prepared to guide a Mentee through the registration and advisement process.
4. Introduce Mentees to the campus community and be willing to attend some activities together.
5. Encourage your Mentee to attend all scheduled Orientation Activities. If possible, accompany the Mentee to all activities.
6. When giving Mentee a tour of key campus areas include the library and emphasize its importance. Also include all recreational areas, such as, the bowling alley, student union facilities, gymnasium, pool, basketball and tennis courts and any other areas of interest.
7. If you have concerns, do not hesitate to contact the Mentor Program Coordinator for advice.

The Role of the Faculty and Staff Mentor

The role of the faculty/staff mentor is one of nurturing, teaching, and providing support in a new and challenging educational environment. The vast array of experiences and knowledge held by the faculty/staff Mentor is critically needed during the transition period and beyond.

The faculty/staff mentor should be a bridge builder between high school and college and a resource person who will answer seemingly complex questions. Finally, the faculty/staff mentor should be a positive role model who will welcome the Mentee into this new and exciting environment.

The faculty/staff role in the Mentor Program could incorporate the following ideas.

1. Secure a commitment to the academic and personal development of each Mentee.
2. Obtain Mentee and Student Mentor assignment prior to freshman orientation activities.
3. Schedule two meetings per month with Student Mentors and Mentee. Lunch time is an excellent period for informal meetings.
4. Share your experiences as a student, faculty, staff person.
5. Advise, if necessary, but encourage use of campus resources at all times.

6. Act as a liaison between the Mentee and other faculty/staff to facilitate communications and solve problems.
7. Support Mentee and Student Mentors by participating in their selected activities and attend activities when they are active participants.
8. Present a warm and caring demeanor; yet demand responsible behavior at all times.
9. Don't be afraid to give Mentees compliments and encouragement.
10. Be warm, friendly, and compassionate but always keep the relationship on a high moral and ethical level.

Training Activities for Mentors

In order to carry out the expressed ideas and purposes of the Mentor Program, volunteers should have some background concerning minority and first generation students. The factors affecting their persistence and environmental assimilation are very important to the Mentor/Mentee relationship.

The discussions on factors affecting student retention should be predominant. Those discussions might focus on the following issues.

1. Lack of Academic (Institutional) Fit (Boredom/Readiness for higher education).
2. Financial Planning and Management. Application process for financial aid.
3. Career Uncertainty. Students who have no idea of career direction are most likely to drop out of college.
4. Personal concerns, such as, problems at home, clothing, cars, etc. have to be put into perspective. Values clarification issues can be discussed here.
5. College adjustment (dissonance/incompatibility). Many minority and first-generation students will need encouragement just to stay in their new educational environment.
6. Employment/goal attainment. Long term commitments must be encouraged instead of short-term goals. The Mentor can relate research which has shown students who attend college and finish have

higher incomes and a better quality of life than most students who drop out.

Dropout Prone Characteristics

1. Low academic achievement
2. Educational/Occupational Uncertainty
3. Limited Educational Aspiration
4. Lack of interest in studies
5. Low goal commitment
6. Inability or unwillingness to study
7. College adjustment difficulty
8. Low self-esteem
9. Illness
10. First-generation student
11. Inadequate financial resources
12. Poor curriculum management
13. Poor teacher-student communication
14. Poor attendance, class preparation and participation
15. Early parenting before post-secondary completion
16. Lack of participation within the college environment
17. Drugs/Alcoholism

Faculty/Staff Activities

1. Sessions that will promote Mentor/Mentee interaction.
2. Programs that will include involvement in early freshmen activities. (Interpersonal activities are used to stimulate the student.)

3. Programs that will provide out-of-class activities in the student's environment.
4. Programs that will provide early feedback about the Mentee's Performance.
5. Programs that provide incentives and rewards for the Mentor/Mentee participation.

The training program should include activities which encourage the Mentor/Mentee relationship to prosper.

These activities might include:

1. Visiting the Mentee's room in the residential complex.
2. Arranging and keeping appointments consistently.
3. Arrange a lunch or dinner occasionally.
4. If possible, invite Mentee to your home and church.
5. Send birthday cards, holiday cards, or other correspondence at the appropriate time.
6. Arrange an informal meeting with the parents when they are on campus.
7. Help Mentee develop a daily log for time management training.
8. Send notes of encouragement before, during, and after mid-term and final examination periods.
9. Send occasional care packages.
10. Encourage Mentee to attend workshops on test-taking, study skills, relaxation techniques, and other campus activities.

Building Relationships

One of the keys to a successful Mentor Program is establishing an effective relationship between the Mentor and the Mentee. If the relationship is not effective, both

parties should report their concerns to the Mentor Program Coordinator. If reassignment is necessary, it should not be viewed as a failure, but an adjustment much like we face in our daily life.

The Mentor should try to meet the Mentee on his or her own ground. This will help to establish a less threatening environment and a framework to build trust. The Mentee may not share many of your experiences, values, and ideas. However, it will be your responsibility to lead the Mentee through one of the most difficult experiences they will face in life.

Establishing Rapport

The Mentor/Mentee relationship has the potential to be a long term and positive alliance if rapport is established. Rapport can be established in a number of ways. Some ways include but are not exclusive are: (1) The Mentor should be comfortable with the Mentee and project that feeling of comfort. (2) The Mentor should initiate and encourage conversations. (3) The Mentor should try to understand and clarify acceptable behaviors and values of the campus community. (4) As the relationship grows and camaraderie develops, self-disclosure on turning points in the Mentors' experiences may be appropriate. (5) Always be empathetic and not sympathetic in establishing affiliations.

Ethical Principles of Mentoring Programs

The American College Personnel Association (ACPA) requires its members to subscribe to the highest standards of ethical conduct. Acceptance of membership in ACPA signifies that the member agrees to adhere to the standards of ethical conduct. The authors also subscribe to these standards and encourage all Mentor Programs to do the same.

A Mentor should be guided by the highest standards of ethical behavior. The following principles adapted from the ACPA statement of Ethical Principles and Standards should guide the behaviors of all who participate in a Mentor Program.

Act To Benefit Others

Mentors should always strive to (a) promote healthy social, physical, academic, moral, cognitive, career and personality development of students; (b) bring a developmental perspective to the educational environment; (c) contribute to the effective functioning of the institution; and (d) provide programs and services consistent with the principle.

Promote Justice

Mentors should be committed to the fundamental fairness for all individual in the academic community. The principles of impartiality, equity, and reciprocity (the golden rule) are paramount. Mentors should always

promote equal opportunity and abhor discrimination based on age, culture, ethnicity, gender, disabling conditions, race, religion, or sexual/affectional orientation.

Be Faithful

Mentors should always be truthful, forthright, keep appointments and be trustworthy in their relationship with the Mentee.

Do No Harm

Mentors should not engage in any activities that will cause physical or psychological harm. Mentors should abstain from sexual harassment, sexual intimacies, or any other behaviors that would affect the Mentor/Mentee relationship. Mentors will report to the appropriate authority any condition that is likely to harm the Mentee and/or others.

Participants in the Mentor Program should always be guided in their actions and behavior by the ***Ten Commandments of Mentoring***. They are as follows:

1. I will always be a positive role model.
2. I will always be a guide and trusted counselor.
3. I will always be a friend that will listen.
4. I will always be an ethical and non-judgmental advocate.
5. I will always provide a realistic appraisal of the problems facing a mentee.
6. I will always provide some ideas or strategies for the problems facing the mentee.
7. I will be thoroughly familiar will all resources and personnel available to help the mentee.
8. I will subscribe to the ethical principles/ten commandments of the mentoring program.

9. I will relinquish my position if I can not genuinely share the vision of the mentee.
10. I will always abstain from sexual harassment, sexual intimacies or any other behavior that would affect the mentor/mentee relationship.

Final Instructions For Mentoring Programs

Thomas Moloney and Molly McKaughan (1990) in their report on *The New Commonwealth Fund Findings on the Benefits of Mentoring* provide some pertinent instructions for those interested in establishing Mentor Programs.

The findings recapitulate many ideas aforementioned in this training guide. Nonetheless, a restatement of several themes is critical to establishing and maintaining a Mentor Program.

The authors point out that mentor programs could benefit from several activities. They are:

1. *Pre-select mentors.* Mentors could be pre-selected on the basis of having had a mentor who was important to their own development or prior experience as a mentor.
2. *Provide Mentors with training.* Mentors could be given training sessions including advice about appropriate activities, research, and a counselor to call for ongoing activities.
3. *Pre-select students.* Students could be pre-selected on the basis of familiar status (i.e. single parent households) so as to reach more students who have a greater need for the influence of a concerned adult.
4. *Prepare students.* Students should be taught how to get the most out of mentoring. Student readiness

has two components: Openness to change and a willingness to work on the things mentors suggest.

5. *Assign students to mentors or enable them to choose each other.* Students can be either assigned to a mentor or enabled to choose a mentor by mutual consent.
6. *Assign students to mentors by same or different race.* Student could choose or be assigned to a mentor of the same or a different race.
7. *Encourage frequent meetings.* Mentors should be encouraged to meet frequently with the students: Weekly meetings might be preferable to bi-weekly or monthly sessions.
8. *Encourage mentors to engage in specific types of activities.* Specific types of activities might help students more. (Moloney & McKaughan, 1990)

APPENDIX A: Sample Time Table

(WVSC - MENTOR PROGRAM)

March 1990	Develop training packets Develop bulletin board in every building on campus
April 1990	Start recruitment process
May 1990	Letters out to potential Mentors
June 1990	Retrieve listing of potential Mentees, letters out to students explaining the program. (2) Assignment of Mentee to Student Mentor and Faculty/Staff Mentors
July 1990	Follow-up on Mentor/Mentee assignments
August 1990	Program round-up with Faculty/Staff Mentors before Mentees arrive on campus Orientation for Mentors/Mentees
Sept. 1990	Meetings with Student Mentors and Mentees Mini Workshop-Building Relationship
Oct. 1990	Meeting with Student Mentors and Mentees Mini Workshop-Exploring the Mentoring Experience
Nov. 1990	Program evaluation Recruit Target group for the following year Schedule and hold training workshop for Mentors
Dec. 1990	Retrieve listing of potential Mentees Letters out to new students

Jan. 1991	Assignment of Mentee to Student Mentor and Faculty/Staff Mentors Having a Mentoring Program Round-Up
Feb. 1991	Meeting with the Student Mentors and Mentees Mini Workshop-Building Relationships
Mar. 1991	Evaluation of the Mentoring Program Certificates of Participation issued.

APPENDIX B: Mentee Personal Data Form

Student Mentee:_____
Last First M.I.

Campus Address:_____

_____

_____

Phone:_____

Home Address:_____

_____

Classification:_____ Age:_____

Birthday ______

Hobby:_____

Favorite Color:_____

Degree Seeking:_____

Other Special Information:_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX C: Faculty/Staff Appointment Sheet

Please keep an accurate record of meetings and return to the Coordinator for Retention Programs or the Mentoring Program Coordinator at the end of each month.

Mentee's Name:_____

Contact Date, Notations, Referrals/Recommendations

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Additional Comments

_____

_____

_____

_____

Mentor:_____ Date:_____

Faculty:_____ Date:_____

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APPENDIX D: Mentee Program Evaluation Sheet

Please evaluate the Mentor Program by using the scale listed below.

5-Strongly Agree
4-Agree
3-Somewhat Agree
2-Disagree
1-Strongly Disagree

1. The Mentor Program helped me adjust to college life _____
2. The Mentor Program helped me think more in terms of a career objective _____
3. The Mentor Program helped me become more goal oriented _____
4. The Mentor Program helped me become aware of campus resources _____
5. The Mentor Program gave me a better understanding of the degree I'm seeking _____
6. The Mentor Program has helped me become a better student _____
7. The program has interested me in becoming a Student Mentor _____
8. I recommend the Mentoring Program to other students _____

9. The Mentor Program provided me with an ethical and non-judgmental mentor ____
10. The Mentor Program provided me with a positive role model ____
11. The Mentor Program provided me with a variety of social, cultural and intellectual activities ____
12. Comments:

APPENDIX E: Program Evaluation for Faculty, Staff, and Student Mentors

The purpose of this evaluation is to solicit your comments and/or suggestions as they pertain to the Mentor Program. We need your help in identifying the positive and negative aspects of the Mentor Program. Please take a few moments to complete this short evaluation and return it to the Mentoring Program Coordinator.

During the Fall ____ or Spring ____ semester 19___ I served as

___Mentor (Faculty or Staff)

___Student Mentor

Please use the scale below to evaluate certain aspects of the Mentoring Program. The scale is as follows:

5—Strongly Agree

4—Agree

3—Somewhat Agree

2—Disagree

1—Strongly Disagree

The Mentor Program provided my assignment in a timely manner 5 4 3 2 1

The Mentor Program provided adequate training and follow-up assistance 5 4 3 2 1

The Mentor Program was helpful in helping the students' transition to college 5 4 3 2 1

The Mentor Program round-ups were effective 5 4 3 2 1

Mentees made most of their appointments 5 4 3 2 1

Mentee helped me to grow 5 4 3 2 1

The Mentor Program should be continued 5 4 3 2 1

Student Mentors

Having participated in the program, I am now a better student 5 4 3 2 1

As a Student Mentor, the program provide me with the opportunity to promote leadership skills 5 4 3 2 1

This program should be continued at WVSC 5 4 3 2 1

Faculty/staff Mentors

The students assigned readily participated in all aspects of the program 5 4 3 2 1

This program should be continued at WVSC 5 4 3 2 1

The mentee was sincere and took initiative 5 4 3 2 1

APPENDIX F: Organization Chart
Mentor Program

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